



PASTORAL CARE POLICY

“All young people have the right to be valued and respected, to be educated in a secure and caring environment and to have their abilities and talents nurtured and developed to their full potential.”

Ethos Statement

Pastoral Care attempts to meet the needs of all children – social, spiritual, mental, emotional, physical – so that each child has the opportunity, in a safe environment, to reach her potential in every area of her life, and is equipped with the skills to cope with the ‘outside world’.

At St Joseph’s Primary School pastoral care permeates all aspects of school life. It reflects the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of our Catholic faith and involves all members of our school community – children, parents and all other adults who contribute to the well being of each child.

We strive to create an atmosphere where God’s love is experienced by all members of the school community through their nurturing relationships with each other; where Christ is the example to all; where each child is helped to develop to his/her full potential.

The atmosphere of the school is based upon good relationships between staff, pupils and parents. As a staff we work as a team, respecting each other’s roles and recognising individual talents and expertise. We are concerned with the needs and well being of each child and with the approaches and programmes we implement in order to aid personal development. We are also a Nurturing school, following Nurturing principles, focusing on ensuring the school is a safe base, where children’s learning is understood developmentally, we build self- esteem through positive word and action, we understand that language and behaviour are vital means of communication and that transition periods are significant times in the lives of children.

As Catholic education is a partnership between home, school and parish we recognise and value the important role which parents play in their child’s education. Every effort is made to ensure that parents feel welcome in school, that they are made aware of the school’s aims, objectives and policies and of their child’s individual needs, progress and achievements. We encourage parents to co-operate fully with us in caring for each child and achieving our goals.

We liaise closely with our parish, particularly our Board of Governors, Parish Priest and School Chaplain. We endeavour, with their help, to create a meaningful network of interpersonal relationships and an environment where the Gospel values of love, mutual understanding, respect, peace, justice and forgiveness flourishes.

Within the staff there is concern for the whole school community – children, staff, parents support personnel and visitors. We endeavour to care for and support each other and encourage this caring to extend to the wider community – locally, nationally and internationally.

AIMS

Through our Pastoral Care policy we aim

- To create and maintain an atmosphere where the children feel they are known, safe, valued, respected and happy
- To promote good behaviour
- To maintain the highest standards of teaching and learning
- To respond in a sympathetic way to the concerns, fears and worries of the children
- To build an atmosphere of trust
- To make children aware of potential dangers.
- Develop the 'Nurturing' principles

ETHOS

A positive ethos only happens when all staff collectively promotes an atmosphere of care and respect within the formal and informal life of the school community. This results in an atmosphere in which both pupils and staff feel secure, welcome, valued and able to discuss their interests and voice their fears and concerns, confident that they will receive a sympathetic and supportive response.

In the St Joseph's Primary School

- Individuals are valued, cared for and respected
- Good relationships flourish throughout
- The school is welcoming
- There is a stimulating learning environment
- Effective teaching and learning takes place
- Pupils' confidence, self-esteem, self-respect, respect for others, self-discipline and responsibility are promoted
- Pupils are encouraged to value one another
- Pupils show a strong sense of belonging to the school community

Where ethos is right, pupils take pride in their achievements and recognise the importance of high standards in their work and behaviour.

RELATIONSHIPS

A good relationship between children and staff is paramount to generating a positive atmosphere within the school community where every individual feels valued and cared for at all times.

Good relationships will be nurtured between:

- Board of Governors and school
- Staff and pupils
- Pupils and their peers

- Members of staff
- Senior Management team and staff
- Staff and parents
- School and surrounding community

VALUES

The teacher should share his/her values and beliefs with the children and not only his/her knowledge.

SELF-ESTEEM

We believe that self-esteem and respect are central to the development of the whole child and promotes learning.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for the implementation of the curriculum, including monitoring the safety of each child in the school.

The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that Pastoral Care is given a high profile in the school development plan.

The co-ordinator, (Miss Weir, working in collaboration with safeguarding team and staff), will monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Pastoral Care policy. She will work with all staff and ensure resources are kept up to date and that staff is properly trained. She will ensure non-teaching staff are familiar with the Pastoral Care policy and give help when needed.

Each member of staff will work to build up pupils' self-esteem and encourage them to be assertive and to resist negative peer pressure. They will help them to celebrate success and develop the ability to make moral decisions and to know the difference between right and wrong.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Parents are always welcome and are encouraged to contact their child's teacher, the Principal or Parent Support Officer if they have any concerns or worries. We encourage parents to share concerns about home circumstances or medical matters, which may affect their child's behaviour or work in school. Any information will be treated as confidential. The school has worked to provide programmes and areas (sensory) where they can relax, feel calm and hopefully develop a disposition for learning.

Staff will meet regularly to discuss and review the Pastoral Care policy.

PASTORAL ACTIVITIES

Children will be supervised from 8.30 am.

School starts at 8.45 am. Children will assemble in school yard (or school hall during inclement weather).

No child may remain in the classrooms, cloakrooms or corridors during break time or lunch time (unless supervised).

Children are supervised during all after-school activities.

Children are informed that if they are not picked up by their parents /carer when school finishes, they are to go to the office where their parents will be contacted.

Sensory areas

Take Ten programme

The Sunshine Room

Nurturing behaviour and language from all adults

Work of Parent Support Officer

School counselling service

ORGANISATION OF PASTORAL CARE WITHIN THE SCHOOL

In keeping with our school aims, we endeavour to care for each child-

- Spiritually - through the prayer life of the school
- through the use of the Religious Education Programme
- through preparation for the sacraments
- Intellectually - through providing a broad, balanced curriculum suited to the needs of each child
- Socially and emotionally – through building up each child’s self-esteem, social skills, values and attitudes and supporting him/her in every possible way.
Through a nurturing programme, language and behaviour from all
- Physically - through the provision of health education and physical education programmes – helping him/her develop physical skills and to understand and cope with her own development.

The class teacher has responsibility for implementing the Pastoral Care programme on a daily basis, keeping in touch with the home, informing the Principal when a child has a particular need, in times of sickness, difficulties at home, bereavement etc.

At such times he/she will encourage class support through-

- A welcoming smile

- Prayer
- A card or gift
- A hospital or home visit
- Attending a funeral
- On-going support and friendship

In his/her work of caring for each child, the class teacher is supported within the school by other members of staff, according to need, and by outside agencies as listed.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES INVOLVED WITHIN THE SCHOOL IN PASTORAL CARE

Parish Clergy	
Parish Marist especially Sr Georgina	
C.C.M.S.	
Diocesan Office	
E.A. officers	
The wider community	
School doctor	
School nurse	
School health visitor	
School police welfare officer	
School education welfare officer	Mrs P Carville
School psychology services	Ms. M. MacDonald
Surestart / family support workers	
Young Enterprise	
Full Service Community Network	
West Belfast Partnership Board	
Outreach support service	
Business in the Community	
Inclusion & Diversity Service	
Nurture Cluster Groups	

IN CONCLUSION

Within the school, the staff will endeavour to be aware of each other's needs, showing consideration, concern, support and understanding at all times.

In our efforts to create a sound system of pastoral care within our school, we realise the need for ourselves to be spiritual people – people in touch with Christ, our model and strength, people who take time to pray, so that God will enable us to be a channel of His love and peace to all who form part of our school community.

